

## Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

had tightened a bolt on the pulley system too much. It fired right up. I used it to haul the grandkids around, and some of them learned to drive on it. I have a lot of good memories. It's still going today."

**Greg Gochneaur, Jefferson, Ohio:** Greg is happy with his **Kobalt** battery-powered tools. "They have plenty of power, especially the 1/2-in. impact. I also have the vacuum. They're all powered by the 24V Max 4.0 battery. I'm well satisfied—nothing but Kobalt tools for me.

"I enjoy this section of FARM SHOW."

**James Stutzman, Seymour, Iowa:** "I really like my **Takeuchi** TL 130 skid loader. It's a little older machine, but it still runs well and starts when it's cold. It's a very tough machine. It's very roomy in the motor area, which helps if I need to work on it.

"I also really love my **DeWalt** cordless tools.

"My worst buy was a **Stihl** MS 211 chainsaw I bought new. It didn't run right from the start. I even had a mechanic work on it. I only kept it for a year before getting rid of it. It could've been used as a colorful boat anchor."

**Robert B. Bullock, La Grange, Ky.:** "I have to nominate my 2004 **Deere** Gator 6x4 (model 3007D003). I bought it used in 2006. It has a Yanmar 3-cyl. diesel engine. Going on 20 years, and it's never failed—no breakdowns. It's incredibly reliable."

**Susie McCurdy, Randlett, Okla.:** "My 2023 **Worx** Aeroart (Vol. 48, No. 6) acts as a wheelbarrow and has many uses, such as carrying feed or tree limbs."

**Tim Weaver, Lititz, Pa.:** **Weaver Metalworking Machinery** manufactures 12-in. and 24-in. brake attachments for ironworkers or shop presses (ph 717-625-0302). They make bending 1/4-in. metal quick and easy. They feature a drop-in bottom insert for single V dies, or you can remove it for use with a 4-way die.

"We're very happy with our **Milwaukee** 18-in. belt sander. It's lightweight and very easy to operate.

"We've had issues with **Snap-on's** 36-in. indexable head pry bar breaking. Snap-on makes great tools, but this one doesn't hold up.

"I'm not pleased with my **Umarex** Synergis air rifle. It shoots 2 1/2-in. groups at 15 yards. I got an Air Venturi Avenue-X PCP, and it shoots 1/4-in. and 1/2-in. groups at 50 yards."

**Wayne Harley, New Brighton, Pa.:** Wayne's the satisfied owner of a 2008 **Dodge** Ram 1500 truck with 162,000 miles. "After 17 years, this old truck still runs very well. The 4.7 engine gets decent gas mileage, and it's a comfortable truck to ride in. It goes to four farmers markets a week. Like all older trucks here in western Pennsylvania, it'll need rust repairs due to salt use on our roads."

**Robert Carr, Alton, N.H.:** Robert likes his side-clip suspenders from **SuspenderStore** ([www.suspenderstore.com](http://www.suspenderstore.com); ph 800-393-4508). "No more hip pain or scrapes on car paint from front clips. Also, no more seat rips from back clips when getting in and out of the car."

**Mike Tiska, Sidney, N.Y.:** "I purchased a set of **Erie Tools** blades for my Simplicity 52-in. zero-turn mower. I've used them for two years, and they're still sharp."

**Myron Schafer, La Crosse, Ind.:** "We've been using **Milwaukee** battery tools for over 10 years. They seem to be good quality and durable. Newer models get better and stronger. Some of the units had issues and were hard to get repaired, so we just bought new ones. Batteries are outrageously expensive. Buying a new tool and battery

together in a bundle is a good way to get more batteries at a reasonable price."

**James Czarniecki, Dorsey, Ill.:** "My best buy was an **American Standard** walk-in tub that I installed. It's good quality and wasn't too hard to install, as long as you can get it through the door. They're pricey but worth it.

"My worst buy was a 16-speed drill press from **Northern Equipment**. The cast-iron base is thin and of poor quality. It broke while I was installing it. I had to repair and reinforce it."

**Donald Hennings, Mena, Ark.:** "I bought a cordless **Hart** weed eater from Walmart the year before last. It's still going strong. My wife loves this thing. It isn't hard to start like most gas-powered weed eaters. It's quiet and does a good job. I'd say it's ideal, especially for women."

**David Shepard, Howell, Mich.:** David is happy with his 1987 **Craftsman** 3.7 20-in. chainsaw. "This has been a reliable, hardworking saw since day one. I believe that the fact that it called for a 25-to-1 gas mixture allowed for better lubrication, leading to longer engine life. I've stuck with the same mixture on my newer saws, with the same long-lasting results."

On the negative side are **PowerCare** chain files. "These chain files are made in China. After using them for a couple of sharpenings, they no longer cut without excessive pressure. I now only buy files made in Germany or Sweden. Oregon files used to be good, but now some are made in China."

**Vic Stratman, Argyle, Mo.:** Vic's best buy is a **Deere** 6400 with a 640 loader. "I bought this tractor with 3,200 hrs., now it has 12,465 hrs. Both the tractor and loader are great. I've used it for everything. The repairs aren't cheap, but it has earned each one. If there's a better tractor, I haven't driven it.

**"If there's a better tractor, I haven't driven it."**

"I've been reading FARM SHOW for over 40 years. It's a best buy, too.

"The **DeWalt** cordless chainsaw I bought in 2023 is my worst buy ever. The bar oil cap leaked oil everywhere on each of the three saws my dealer got as replacements when they quit. They should stick to drills and other tools they know how to make."

**Leroy Jackemeyer, Auburn, Ind.:** Leroy is unhappy with his **Stihl** GTA 26 pruner, which he purchased new in 2024. "I've had many Stihl chainsaws, grass trimmers, hedge trimmers, blowers, etc., over the years without any problems until I bought this pruner. It won't cut dead sprouts or branches—the chain jumps the bar. Putting the chain back on takes a long time. I contacted Stihl, and they said there's nothing they can do. They need to put a warning label on this product: 'Will not cut dead sprouts or branches.'"

**Driskel Bros., Nevada, Mo.:** They've been impressed with a **Husqvarna** 3120 and several 395 chainsaws. "We've used Husky saws in our tree-trimming business since 1986. They're dam good products and just keep on cutting. We use 24 to 48-in. bars with no trouble and plenty of power to get the job done."

On the negative side is a 1994 **Ford** F-350 460-cu. in. V8 fuel-injected pickup truck. "It's just junk. If they'd just left the truck like



**Orwick** says he and his dad's **Kawasaki Ridge** side-by-sides are comfortable and powerful.

## Best Buy Side-By-Side

**Will Orwick, Mud Butte, S.D.:** Orwick says his 2025 **Kawasaki Ridge** side-by-side is powerful and quiet, and it easily handles all types of terrain on his family's ranch.

"It has great 4-wheel suspension that handles ruts on our ranch roads much more easily and quickly than a 4-WD pickup or our previous ATV," Orwick says. "With just over a foot of under-frame clearance, I can veer off a pasture road to check cattle or fences without worrying about getting hung up or bottoming out. The deep-tread Duro 30X10.00 R14 tires provide great traction going up and down hills, over rocks, and in muddy conditions."

Orwick's wife and young son really appreciate the heated and air-conditioned cab. They can ride on roads and trails in all weather conditions.

"We get a lot of 90-plus-degree days, and the wind always seems to blow, so having the cab keeps us out of the heat and dust."

Orwick chose the Kawasaki over other brands because it was quiet and easy to handle, and he thought the 2-speed CVT transmission would be ideal for road travel and for handling their rugged pasture terrain.

"We had a Gator my dad bought used. It didn't have the power to pull a trailer along our fence lines and wasn't very good for checking pastures. The engine went bad. We had a reman put in, but then it had electrical issues, so we parked it. We're traveling 15 to 20 miles away from home most days and need a rig that's dependable and won't leave us stranded."

they made back from 1988 to 1989, they'd be fine. The frames and bodies are really good, but the motors are junk."

**Ed Peters, Greenwood, Wis.:** Ed is pleased with the hydraulic rebuild kits from **Wapsi Innovations** in New Hampton, Iowa ([www.wapsiinnovations.com](http://www.wapsiinnovations.com); ph 641-229-7413). "I read about the kits in FARM SHOW in 2018 (Vol. 42, No. 6). I bought two sets and installed them in my Deere 4240. They work awesome. The tractor used to be an oily, dusty mess, but now it stays dry and clean—one of the best repair investments I've made.

**"One of the best repair investments I've made."**

"I have a neighbor who runs a repair shop specializing in Deere tractors. I mentioned the repair kits to them. They ordered some

Orwick says his dad bought a Ridge first, and he quickly followed suit. He says the Ridge has a comfortable cab with a DC outlet and two USB ports. The 94-hp 4-stroke engine features electronic fuel injection and is quiet and fuel-efficient. The Ridge has a 90.7-in wheelbase, is 64 in. wide, and includes electric power steering, a rear diff lock, and double-wishbone rear shocks.

"The cargo bed is 35-in. long and 49-in. wide. It works well for hauling fencing supplies, and we could probably strap a calf in there if we needed to," he says with a grin. "It has a 2-in. receiver, so we can easily pull a small trailer or dump cart and haul fencing supplies."



**Orwick** praises the long-travel double-wishbone front and rear suspension.

for their own tractor and also became a dealer for Wapsi rebuild kits."

**David Huntrods, Collins, Iowa:** "I've fixed many things with **J-B Weld**. Two years ago, I fixed the block (motor) on my 20-year-old **Dixon** mower, which was another best buy. I'm disappointed they don't make Dixon's anymore."

**Cliff Fivecoat, Emmett, Idaho:** "Several years ago, my grandfather got a **Leatherman** multi-tool ([www.leatherman.com](http://www.leatherman.com); ph 800-847-8665). He gave it to my father, who then gave it to me. I promptly broke the knife blade—apparently, it's not designed to be used as a mini pry bar. The tool was repaired and returned to me within six days, no questions asked. There was no need for a long list of correspondence. Truly a great company that stands behind its work and products."

**John Marquardt, Wittenberg, Wis.:** "I bought a **Toyota** Prius in 2011. After 200 miles, it quit. The inverter was bad. The dealer fixed it at no cost because it was under warranty. We get 50 mpg on average. The best we've seen is 67 mpg. We're happy with this car. It has 210,000 miles on it."